

BALTIMORE CITY DEPARTMENT OF PLANNING
URBAN DESIGN AND ARCHITECTURE REVIEW PANEL
MEETING MINUTES

Date: May 8, 2014 **Meeting No.:** 184

Project: Remington P.U.D. **Phase:** Master Plan/Schematic Architecture

Location: 2700 and 2800 Block of Remington Avenue

PRESENTATION:

Mr. Evan Morville, representing Seaweall Development; reintroduced the project to the Panel. He noted that the area of the P.U.D. Master Plan has been reduced in focus to include only the west side of the 2700 and 2800 blocks of Remington Ave. and 211 W. 28th Street.

MASTER PLAN:

Mr. Chris Harvey, architect with Hord, Coplan, and Macht; reviewed the program elements for the Phase One development. As noted, Phase One would be concentrated on the west side of the 2700 block of Remington Avenue and include 15,000 square feet of retail, 35,000 square feet of office, 108 residential market rate rental units and a 181 space parking structure.

Ms. Zona Russell, landscape architect with Floura-Teeter; identified three primary objectives of the proposed streetscape and public open space design: enliven the street, encourage social interaction and create a great, unique space for the Remington neighborhood. As envisioned by Ms. Russel, the thirty foot wide sidewalk along Remington would be articulated by bold stripe concrete bands running perpendicular to the curb and interrupted by planting beds to form areas for outdoor seating both along the building line and the curb line.

SCHEMATIC ARCHITECTURE:

Mr. Harvey identified revisions to the schematic design last presented to the Panel on December 12, 2013. Notable refinements included a more pronounced covered entry plaza, an articulated projected metal canopy and glass enclosure for retail, and a stronger two story base expression which acknowledges the inclusion of second floor office use into the project.

RECOMMENDATION OF THE PANEL:

MASTER PLAN:

The Panel expressed disappointment that the proposed P.U.D. had been reduced in size with the removal of the west side of the 2900 block of Remington Avenue and that a more visionary approach could not be advanced for the triangular block between 27th and 28th streets.

That said, the Panel continued to express support for the Master Plan development along the west side of the 2700 and 2800 blocks of Remington Avenue. The Panel was pleased with the addition of office use within the project to create a truly urban mixed use development. The Panel continued to praise the Developer and Design Team for their efforts to balance sensitive new in-fill construction and adaptive use of existing buildings.

The major concern expressed by the Panel focused on the proposed 30' wide streetscape design along the 2700 block of Remington. Noting both the unusually wide width of this neighborhood sidewalk and the bold banding paving patterns, the Panel felt the effort did not meet the prestated design objectives nor was it "particular to place." The Panel felt the design response failed to address the scale of the sidewalk within the context of an existing intimate and kinetic urban neighborhood. The Panel offered the following comments:

- View the sidewalk open space as a series of uniquely defined interconnected urban rooms so it is both linear as a route and static as a place.
- Consider the sidewalk open space as an extended expression of the history and culture of the neighborhood.
- View the sidewalk open space as an extension of the differing ground level activities within the building.
- Employ exterior lighting, street furniture and artwork as additional tools to define a "uniqueness of place."
- Attention needs to be paid to the future green space and streetscaping considered on the 211 W. 28th St. parcel as part of the master plan and ultimate PUD approval.

ARCHITECTURE:

The Panel continued to compliment the Design Team on the historic industrial warehouse aesthetics. The utilization of masonry, industrial window frames and metal panels were well received. The Panel was particularly pleased with the Design Team's use of warehouse dock canopy precedence to accommodate the extension of the retail beyond the masonry box. The Panel expressed concern about two specific areas:

ONE STORY EXTENSION ALONG 27th STREET:

Compared to the light and airy expression of the retail extension, the Panel felt the masonry extension along 27th was somewhat heavy handed. The scale of the garage door opening, the bay spacing and window openings seemed inappropriate in the context of the surrounding historic townhomes. The Panel offered the following comments:

- Consider this extension as being “distinct” from the larger five story masonry box by exploring the use of a different architectural expression; perhaps steel frame with glass/brick infill.
- Consider pulling the corners of the extension back from the corners of the five story masonry box.
- Consider a stronger expression of the corner retail element by extending the retail use along 27th to the garage entry.
- Consider a smaller garage door opening set back from the façade and less heroic.
- Consider the two remaining townhouse apartments in the context of the scale and architecture of surrounding existing townhomes.

WEST ALLEY FAÇADE AND TREATMENT:

The Panel expressed significant concern about the impact the solid masonry base and proposed service and parking functions could have on the safety and quality of life for the adjacent townhome residents. The Panel was particularly concerned where the massing of the upper floors projected over the surface parking creating potential safety and security problems. The Panel had the following comments:

- Consider green walls in place of the masonry walls to buffer the parking garage.
- Consider readjusting the upper floor plan and massing to eliminate covered surface parking areas.
- Restudy the service area and clearly show how trucks will service the building without blocking alley thru traffic.
- Demonstrate thru lighting, landscape and hardscape how the Phase One development will have a more positive impact on adjacent townhomes residents.
- Consider parallel parking in lieu of the pull in spaces, to allow for a meaningful landscape buffer between the development and the ‘street’. Also consider additional improvements to Fox Street to create a more traditional streetscape.

PANEL ACTION:

The Panel recommends additional development of the master plan. The Panel recommends approval with comments of the schematic architecture with the development team to study and specifically address the above comments.

Attending:

Zolna Russell, Zach Baier – FTLA

Evan Morville, Thibault Manekin – Seawall Development

Chris Harvey, Sean Kefferstan, Brad Holder, Nick Aello, Sharon Pula – HCM

UDARP Panel Members – Ms. Diane Jones Allen and Judith Meany, Messrs. Rich Burns* and David Haresign

Planning Department- Mr. Tom Stosur, Anthony Cataldo, Christina Gaymon, Wolde Ararsa, Laurie Feinberg, Katie-Rose Imbriano